



Forward Thinking, High Achieving.

Teacher Support Staff Superintendent Advisory
4:00-5:00 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2014
Administration Building – 215 S. 6th Street West
Room 14

Members: Adriel Shearer, Alex Apostle, Anthony Zook, Avis Chenoweth, Bradford Herron, Carol MacIntyre, Cathleen Armstrong, Connie Pederson, Dave Burtch, Diane Anderson, Elizabeth McGrath, Hatton Littman, Janice Nugent, Karen Allen, Mary McAllister, Melanie Charlson, Melissa Lynn, Sarah Lee, Tricia Owens

Members Present: Alex Apostle, Hatton Littman, Janice Nugent, Adriel Shearer, Camille Barraclough, Avis Chenoweth, Diane Anderson, Sarah Lee, Brad Herron, Jane McAllister, Karen Allen, Crista Anderson, Tricia Owens

Others Present: Trevor Laboski, Heather Davis Schmidt

Members Absent: Anthony Zook, Carol MacIntyre, Cathleen Armstrong, Connie Pederson, Dave Burtch, Elizabeth McGrath, Melanie Charlson, Melissa Lynn

NOTES

Welcome – At 4:03 p.m. Superintendent Alex Apostle opened the meeting and welcomed all. We will be finished by 5 p.m. He asked if there were any questions on the minutes; there were none.

Employee recognition – Heather Davis Schmidt (Diane Anderson)

Heather explained that we have been focusing on student recognition work with principals, and we have been doing staff recognition at Board meetings; she thinks it is something we should be doing. Alex: We have recognized a considerable number of both classified and certified staff. He asked for any ideas on what we could do. Diane Anderson passed around handouts; she commented that when people do a stellar job, they should be recognized. A custodian suggested in the newsletter to have days set aside for particular groups. She thinks as a district we do a lot of really good things, but the shift worked or location in a building may make people feel overlooked. We have had employee potlucks. Administrators work hard to recognize people for different things. She thinks it is something people would appreciate a lot. One district listed the days for different groups and made sure it was out there. At one time the district used to put an apple in the box or something for different groups. Be creative:

anything from stickers to plaques to recognize people in the further outreaches, like the central kitchen or maintenance. That is what she thinks they are really looking for. Alex: things happen in buildings too; maybe a committee could look at meaningful ways we could recognize our staff. There are so many people in the district doing so much. We could not be doing the things we are in new programs and in maintaining programs if we did not have people working very hard. [Alex was temporarily called out of the meeting.] Karen: in another district she received the “And then some” award from teachers. We have done that within the district. It has become a card, the “And then some” award. She suggested that we could come up with a consistent way in which when you do your job and then some, and someone writes a nice note on the back; it is part of everyone learning to recognize each other. Karen would accept the opportunity to be on a committee, and that is an idea she would bring. Not too formal. Heather: there are important places for formal recognition, like the “Grill and Chill” in the spring to recognize retirees, but it is also nice to do informal recognition. Hatton: the informal recognition would fit in with the schools. Karen: it is important to have a consistent something. Adriel brought up the MBI program. In a training two summers ago at the building level, there were a lot of great ideas about recognizing staff, positive reinforcement, and things like that. Karen: it is something that MBI teams could talk about and that we could encourage all MBI teams to do. Adriel suggested that it would make the recognition more authentic and genuine, coming from staff within the building. Hatton: When it is building specific and you are recognized for things in your own building, it reinforces core values. Diane: Key Club at Big Sky did something similar when she was there; coming from a school organization, it was very meaningful, and kids saw the value in what you did. Trevor mentioned groups like the night custodians: it is easier for a high school principal, because you are there a lot at night. Often the night custodians are not recognized for anything. But during the day, like with MBI stuff, people are not around to see what the night custodians do. Still getting at that point is a struggle, another layer. We could have something formal to say this is the week to focus on this group. At Meadow Hill, they are trying a staff notebook with staff notes to one another; you write your name at the top of blank paper and everyone writes something positive about you. Camille: lots of schools have postcards that go out for students as an idea from the MBI thinking; it would be easy to change that for staff. Sarah: someone at Rattlesnake on the MBI committee had die cut hearts and wrote personal positive notes to people. They were posted on a wall in the staff room; it was covered with positive notes. Jane: very visual; it makes you think of doing it. Another suggestion as an MBI thing: a raffle for all staff, not in recognition of anything, but something they look forward to. Heather: we are all in agreement that it is a good idea to recognize employees. We have a lot of ideas.

Introductions: Trevor Laboski, ERD; Hatton Littman, Communications and Technology; Janice Nugent, speech/language pathologist, 4th in seniority on the committee; Adriel Shearer, Sentinel social studies. Adriel explained that he recruits judges for the February 14 district qualifying meet; he will send an email to teachers asking for judges. It is all day and evening, and Saturday too. Camille Barraclough, Meadow Hill; Avis Chenoweth, Native American specialist; Diane Anderson, catalog and system specialist at the district library; Sarah Lee, kindergarten at Rattlesnake; Heather Davis Schmidt, ERD; Brad Herron, 6th grade at Washington; Jane McAllister, 4th grade at Lewis and Clark. Jane noted that if there are any other 4th or 5th grade teachers, they get out at 3:30 and getting here by 4 is tight. Crista Anderson, instructional coach; Tricia Owens, 2nd grade at Lowell. Trevor added that he is a parent of a L&C kindergartener.

Recruitment practices for school sports – Trevor Laboski (Adriel Shearer)

Adriel noted that the question did not come from the basketball coach. It seemed like there are a number of basketball players in particular who are competing at Hellgate HS but who are not living in the Hellgate HS district; they are from the Bitterroot, Frenchtown, Florence—he is not sure of specifics.

The question is whether we are ignoring this, pretending it does not happen? Is it happening, or is it not an issue? Trevor replied that the MHSA rules are that you cannot recruit. A year or two ago, Bozeman accused Butte of recruiting for basketball; they had some evidence but could not prove it. It falls on the athletic directors to train coaches not to do it. Recruitment could be as simple as asking some player to send a text. Trevor said he does not know of specific complaints or allegations of recruitment. Club sports tend to have a big impact in Missoula: the kids play in the summers and decide they want to continue playing together. He ran into the same issue in Corvallis with Hamilton and Stevensville. He can tell you if you move from Stevensville or Florence to the Hellgate HS area, you can play. You are making a move. If you have divorced parents and have to move because of that situation, that is fine. After 20 days of playing there, you are that school's property, basically. If you transfer, you have 90 days in which you cannot compete on varsity. That's a semester. Often it raises a concern when kids transfer. MHSA used to have a rule that you can't move; you'd be punished. Now you see people transfer at the beginning of 4th quarter for the next year, ready to practice. Then it is a question of how you are going to prove that person was recruited. Unless there is evidence, you can't get at it. Often there are family decisions to move from one program to another. There are legitimate reasons. Otherwise, if it is found out not to be legitimate, you forfeit all games for the season. It falls on the athletic directors. Trevor has talked to all the athletic directors and asked them whether they know the guidelines and what counts as recruitment, and he has reminded them they can't do these things. Adriel: if you are playing basketball in Stevensville and it is your junior year, and you stay there the entire year, and over the summer you do open enrollment and enroll in Big Sky, are there 90 days before you can play? Trevor: Yes. School cannot report out because of FERPA. No one will risk forfeiting games. They have to break ties with their residence or wait the 90 days, which is traditionally what you see. People time it. Alex had returned to the meeting a few minutes earlier; he asked for details about this discussion. Trevor explained that we have not had complaints; we have reinforced what recruitment is to the athletic directors. The impact of club sports in Missoula is a big issue. If you transfer, you can't play varsity for 90 days; but if you move because of divorce or file for a hardship, you can jump right in. Alex asked Adriel if he is hearing about recruiting violations. Adriel replied that he does not know any specifics; it is a question he was asked to bring. Alex: if you have any specifics, we definitely need to look into it. Karen: do people know that we do have some teams where kids from other places play with our students, the co-op situations? Heather: that is the case with some football at Big Sky and some cross country. For example, Valley Christian does not have enough kids to field a team, and Florence does it in track and field. Alex said we should have had an AD here to respond. This can get out of hand. Trevor replied that he has called them all; they said no one has filed a complaint, and they have talked to their coaches. It is a very contentious issue. When you see non-Hellgate HS kids playing on the team, it raises eyebrows. But people don't always know the kids' situations. Brad: some of it is academic programs. Also, the club sports are a big deal. If you play 5 months of the year with the same group, you might like to continue to play with them, perhaps to help protect your ability to play at the club level. Alex: if someone has specifics, they can call him direct and he will take it from there.

Special Ed technology – Karen Allen (Janice Nugent, Jefferson)

Janice: the person who brought up the topic had expressed concern that special education is overlooked when the district is looking at technology; they have very little access to state of the art technology. Janice asked the specialists; someone wondered why we don't have an augmentative technology specialist. We have two therapists skilled in feeding children who cannot swallow; we could have an assistive technology specialist who could do that. Someone said we had a committee for assistive technology that she was on two years ago, but she has not heard more about it. Student computers in the classroom: resource teachers don't have enough, and there is also not enough bandwidth, but that is standard. In the resource rooms, there are three classrooms with one computer for teachers. It would

be nice to have at least 2-3 computers so students have access. Janice knows this field is changing dramatically daily; the iPad is changing it while we speak. It used to be that assistive technology devices would cost \$5,000, but now you can get an iPad and software for \$200. But special education people feel that they are not getting a big enough piece of the technology pie. Alex: we are heading toward the 21st century bond issue. The facilities strategic plan relates to it. We have determined our instructional direction through the 21st century initiative, and the facilities strategic plan is designed to support that. It is very important that we come together at each site to determine what the needs are. This is the moment when if you need something, you need to speak up. It will become part of the 21st century bond issue: technology, safety and security, and facilities. Bring it to our attention. Hatton: a member of the special education team, a physical therapist representing special education interests, is on the district technology team. We have had two meetings this year. We have not specifically discussed assistive technologies. As we build the basis for what will go out to the community, Hatton will include these types of requests: if we need increases to our current equity model, like enough devices in resource rooms—to some extent that may be a building decision how the devices are distributed. As we plan the 21st century bond issue, it is an opportunity to increase the ratio of devices to students. Wireless and infrastructure: infrastructure is needed for assistive technology, this is a place to add that; otherwise it is the depreciable category like printer ink, etc. With regard to specific information, we would like the tech committee to discuss this; Hatton is always open to that. We are doing the social studies curriculum in T&L right now. The same thing could happen with regard to special ed assistive technology. Janice: if you are looking at it as a building level issue, she would also ask that you look at it as a department level issue. If they are talking about prioritizing needs of the building, it might not get priority. Also, in terms of universal design, she asked if classroom amplification is being considered. Janice said she will write something for the facilities committee. An FM system for every kid who has a hearing aid would be great, but if rooms have that system, it would help. Hatton: that is the kind of infrastructure, hardwired thing—submit it. Heather: it supports early literacy; we would want it in our dual language classrooms. Adriel: do all buildings have little computer speakers as primary amplification? Crista: text to speech and speech to text, especially looking toward the Smarter Balanced Assessment; the more experience, the less of an issue. Alex: the staff around the table today is very influential in the district. Fall of 2015 is our moment. We as educators have the responsibility to explain to the community what we need in order to continue our work with our kids. Please get involved, please influence the process, please go forward with what we need. We are not going to run these too often. Influence your buildings and your programs to put forward what we really need to continue our great work. We have a responsibility to tell the public what we need as educators to move the district forward. He believes that people are ready to move and support us. We need to make sure that we communicate and ask for what we need. The meetings at the end of this month are critical. Once we say this is what we need, that will be it. The reason we are waiting until fall of 2015 is that we want inclusion, transparency, and completeness. There are some people who want to run this early. You need to make sure the entire staff is with you and that the community is with you. We have legitimate needs and legitimate positions on these issues. We are way behind as far as technology infrastructure. Safety and security: buildings are not safe for students and teachers. Facilities: we have teachers teaching in closets; it is unacceptable. Let the community know what we need. Trevor: is it a resource or a life skills concern? As a principal he relied on the tech committee for purchasing. They bought 10 iPads before he left. It is critical to offer them; some kids come in with them already because it is how they communicate. Then they need the infrastructure to support them, Wi-Fi. He suggests the building level tech committee as the place to take specific issues to, and also the regional director. There are great apps for kids to learn on. Adriel: a couple years ago he checked out iPads with big briefcases. Sarah: they are still around. Heather thinks they are CSPD owned. Crista: when we did the rollout of interactive whiteboards, they planned to put them in classrooms of a couple grades at a time, but special ed was

overlooked. She thinks that carries over into the iPad situation. They are all there now, but they kind of got the last one. Heather: Trevor's point about bringing it to regional directors is really key. She has received only one request from Region 2 and we were able to meet it; some iPads and a printer, as a teacher request to enhance the classroom. Janice: there is an atmosphere of why ask, I know I'm not going to get it. Heather: historically that has been the case, but times are changing. Alex: these are important points you made. We are documenting them and will follow up; he encouraged staff to get involved. Janice: this is five different people's comment. Karen will also talk to Janice. Karen knows speech/language pathologists have iPads and have had training. We have had quite a lot of technology throughout special education throughout the district. An adjunct to the district technology committee might be a short term special ed sub group to investigate what we have and document what we don't have. We have surround sound in 2 buildings, and they worked hard for it. The idea of a small district group that looks at technology is a fine idea. We have used the Rural Institute for that before. If there is a need for a closer on the ground group, we could do that. Janice: the help desk can't help with individual student systems. Hatton: an internal issue. Karen suggests a short term special ed subcommittee for the tech committee: we could invite everyone and work on it for one day.

Appearance of non-equitable district focus addressing student academics— Karen Allen (Janice Nugent, Jefferson)

Janice had asked the person who asked it to be brought up, to explain it. The first person who brought it up said she heard most of the things at an open MEA meeting when they were meeting with Board members; there were significant concerns expressed by special educators about the focus on top level students with IB and academies at the cost of middle performing students not being addressed as closely. They said many AP students feel that IB is a duplication of the AP service and that those kids already have their needs met. Clarification from the person: special education and regular teachers stated concerns for lower performing students and support for their teachers. When staff ask for more money for special services, it is beg, borrow or steal. The kids who need the most are getting the least. Janice asked for specifics; she had only one specific. Trevor commented that he thinks it is a huge issue of communication about programs. We talk a lot about IB and academies and dual immersion, because they are new things, and STEM. But that's not all that goes on. At Big Sky they started a thrift store for special education students, where they do their vocational work; they have volunteers from RSVP; they have ukulele classes open to all kids. Academies are not for elite kids. Trevor said he'd like to make a billboard. They are used all across the country in different models. Boeing, for engineering, not for top end kids, in Philadelphia in the inner city. Trevor explained to T&L before we started that this is for the forgotten 75% in the middle who don't get much. The top end students need things, not necessarily specialized programs. Big Sky had 39% on free and reduced lunch overall, and we had 35% for the academy. We wanted a cross section, and we got it; we have kids in wheelchairs; we wanted to include kids. You are going to 8th grade counselors all over the county asking for kids who caused problems, for those who never got interested. IB is a new program, nothing like AP. How do you implement it? You might start with kids on the 4 point scale. The parent meetings for the academy were filled with parents of 4.0 kids or those who were engaged. You have to go out and recruit kids; the parents who are in tune find it first. The goal is to impact the entire school. IB is successful for all kids, giving kids the hope they can go to college and see something different from what they see at home. Adriel: IB is more inclusive than AP at pulling up the kids in the middle. The College Board and AP have pushed that you have to be as inclusive as possible, but it is a hard road to get kids in the middle to sign up for AP classes. The rigor makes it hard to bridge that gap. We will see over time that IB is more inclusive at serving kids in the middle than AP. It pulls the higher kids even higher, and it gives kids in the middle the environment in which they can really thrive. And if you have a kid who thrives in one area, AP has the strength of pulling up the kids who want to focus in one subject. Janice: this is very poorly understood. The

comment came from this group of teachers. She commented that there is leftover resentment about how all the professional development money for the district went to IB, according to street legend. Adriel: the same year the district sent all those teachers to IB training, they sent teachers to AP training. Alex: we have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars from the Washington P-20 grant sending teachers to training. We will continue to do it. That is the way you move the district forward. Alex noted that he had people criticizing language immersion; it has been in place only 6 months. IB and the academy are in their 2nd year. His response to people who are critical of what we are trying to do is to ask them what their alternative is. Adriel: there is one building where they spend more per student than any other: it is Willard. Those are the kids who need the most attention, and they are getting it; it is limited way more than IB or AP. Trevor: part of it is on us. In terms of communication, what are we doing? At Sentinel you have the district-wide automotive program; it is expensive. Tire changing programs for kids who don't have college on their mind, or an extra Ag teacher at the Ag Center last year: we don't talk about it nearly as much. There was agreement that it is a perception issue and communication issue. Alex: we have 5 new Board members. We are sharing with them the five year strategic plan, the continuation of the work we have been doing for 5 years. We will go deeper into the strategic plan, then meet with principals and explain about the 5 year strategic plan, then they will meet with the staff. We will keep working with it as we go forward, all on the same page. Alex commented that there is another myth: that he walks into a school and tells them they will do specific programs. It is the furthest from the truth. It has to come from the heart. The staff has to want to do these things. At Big Sky, 92 percent of the staff voted in favor of pursuing IB. Lewis and Clark brought it to us. Paxson was a little bit different. We need to continue to do the very best we can for our kids to prepare them for this 21st century world that we are 14 years into. Alex sent out a quote from Lance Melton about change. Change is difficult. It is hard for all of us, something we need to deal with. If we don't, we will all suffer. We have to do the very best we can because the charter schools would love to come into Missoula and Montana, and eventually they will be here. We want to be in a position as a district in which we are on the forefront. What we have done is a start. We are being recognized on February 4 by Denise Juneau as a trailblazer, based on the efforts of our staff. She knows it is not easy to do these things and that not everyone is 100 percent supportive. We owe it to our children and to our future to do the things we are doing. We are fortunate to have resources coming into the district to help us train our teachers. Our staff have been everywhere. If we continue doing the things we are doing, we will continue to have outside funding. If you don't have outside funding, you will be standing still. And we can't afford to do it. Stick with the program. We will be just fine. Heather: the IB diploma program currently in place at Hellgate is different from what we are talking about in IB in general. The IB diploma does mirror the AP program. We are talking about an IB continuum that goes K-12 and in Seeley K-10, and we are well established on that path. The Primary Years Program, in elementary schools, and the Middle Years Program, in middle school and grades 9-10, are wall to wall 100% of our students. Even the Structured Learning Program at L&C, 100% of the students are involved in inquiry based learning. Karen is alluding to how it raises the learning for all students. Dual language immersion: Kelly Chumrau and the dual language immersion team of teachers, not just the language teachers, are working on recruiting those families regardless of their circumstances; we have worked hard to get as many as we can. The message has not necessarily gotten out that this is for all students. Research we received from Dr. Tara Fortune is that language learning is of benefit to all students. A North Carolina language program study demonstrated that a language immersion program may actually be the best focus for a struggling learner; it has to do with brain structure and the flexibility that happens in your brain when you are multilingual. There are other programs that do the same thing. Language is one of those things. In an analysis of student test scores in NC, those identified with IEPs scored as well as or better than the average students in non-immersion programs. It also raised the scores of non-IEP students in the language immersion program. Adriel: the point Janice raises is that there is an appearance. Janice: there are no special education students in

language immersion. Heather replied that is not true. Janice commented that is what people think. Heather said she can't go into details for FERPA reasons.

Alex noted that it is five after. We will table the last item, and he would like to go back next time and address employee recognition again.

The meeting concluded at 5:08 p.m.

Agenda item tabled until the next meeting:

PLC meeting time commitments – Karen Allen (Janice Nugent, Jefferson)

Wiki link for Teacher, Support Staff, Superintendent, Advisory Committee Information

<http://www.mcpsonline.org/index.php/Teacher, Support Staff, Superintendent, Advisory Committee>

As recording secretary for this meeting, I certify these minutes to be a true and correct copy of what was taken at the meeting.

Elizabeth Serviss, Minutes Recorder

Alex P. Apostle, Superintendent